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Gov. Locke Announces \$43.5 million in Wildlife and Recreation Program Funding

OLYMPIA – July 17, 2003 – Gov. Gary Locke today announced the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) has provided final approval of \$43.5 million in Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) grants.

The IAC approved the grants at its quarterly meeting held July 10 and 11. The grants, combined with local matching funds, will bring the total value of the approved statewide grants list to more than \$73.7 million.

“This funding will assist in the creation and protection of important state recreational areas,” Locke said. “By preserving these valuable natural resources today we ensure a better place to live and play for years to come.”

The WWRP funding supports the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation and conservation lands. Eligible projects go through a multi-step approval process and include important local and state parks, water access sites, trails, critical habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife habitat.

In August 2002, the IAC evaluation teams held open public meetings to assess projects eligible for WWRP funding. The IAC then recommended to the governor a ranked list of these projects for inclusion in the 2003-2005 Capital Budget. Locke submitted all of the IAC recommended fiscal year '04 projects for funding consideration to the 2003 Legislature.

At last week's meeting, the IAC funded 60 individual projects across the state including 27 projects in the Local Parks category; five projects in the Critical Habitat category; four projects in the Natural Areas category; six projects in the State Parks category; nine projects in the Trails category; two projects in the Urban Wildlife Habitat category; and seven projects in the Water Access category.

This year the IAC received 116 applications requesting a total of \$104.5 million, almost \$60 million more funding than was available.

A summary and detailed listing of the funded projects are available on the WWRP funding results page of the IAC Web site at http://www.iac.wa.gov/iac/grants/wwrp_evaluation.htm.

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